

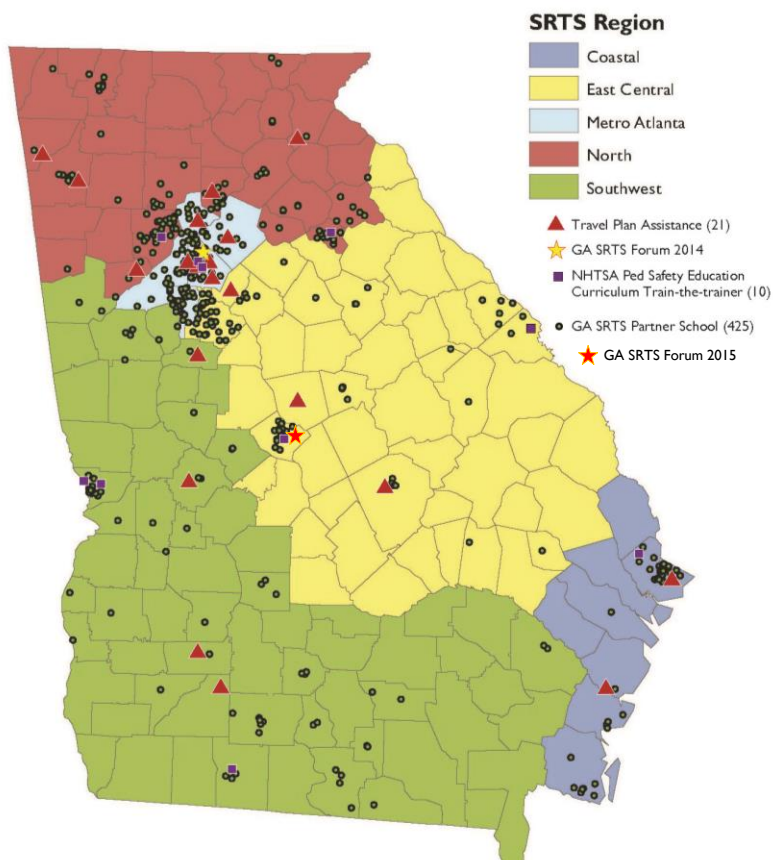


Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center Monthly Progress Report July 2015

The Resource Center serves the State of Georgia by delineating outreach efforts into five geographic territories, serving 430 school Partners across the state. Additionally, the Resource Center has 289 Friends, or community stakeholder partners supporting the state's mission. A map of the five outreach territories and the distribution of SRTS Partner Schools (denoted by dots), is shown on the right. The map also displays locations for National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Child Pedestrian Curriculum trainings, the sites of the 2014 and 2015 Georgia Forums, and sites of SRTS Travel Plans administered by the Resource Center since the project's start in 2009.

In July, the Resource Center School Outreach Coordinators (SOCs) held 105 meetings and gave 12 presentations including four trainings.

All Partners are listed on the complete Partner list at the back of this report. [Click here](#) for more information about the Resource Center's Partnership program.



Outreach

Metro Atlanta Territory – Nichole Hollis, School Outreach Coordinator (SOC)

Nichole serves 135 Partner Schools in the Metro Atlanta Region. She is excited to welcome **Briar Vista Elementary School (DeKalb County)** as a new partner school! In July, Nichole also focused her efforts on meeting with friend organizations including the **Clean Air Campaign Schools Program, Safe Kids Gwinnett, The Clayton County Police Department, and Safe Kids Clayton**. She also delivered three presentations which included a pedestrian and bike safety presentation to the Fairburn Youth summer camp program and provided a Walk Audit.

Oak Grove Elementary School (DeKalb County) held a Walk Audit Event on July 30th. Principal, Lynda Mauborgne, the school champion, parents, and students were present. Nichole facilitated the walk audit and reviewed with the group several barriers and areas of concern. These included broken sidewalks, limited sidewalks,

speeding drivers, traffic congestion issues, and overgrown paths leading up to the school. Nichole is planning to continue meeting with the group to find solutions and also include the **Dekalb Board of Health** and the **Georgia Department of Transportation's** reviews in the report after meeting with the school again. Nichole is also planning a Walk Audit event at **Crabapple Crossing Elementary School (Fulton County School)** in fall of 2015. The parents are concerned with students walking to school due to limited or no sidewalks.

Nichole presented at **The Fairburn Youth Summer Camp Program** on pedestrian and bike safety to 15 campers on July 24th. They learned about the importance of walking to school and also received educational bike safety bookmarks and glow in the dark bracelets emphasizing the "be safe, be seen" initiative.

Nichole attended back to school tabling events in East Point and at **Charles R. Drew Charter School (Fulton County)** to emphasize the benefits of walking and biking to families.

Nichole is currently helping schools to plan for International Walk to School Day and Back to School walking and biking events.

East Central Territory - Taki Smith, School Outreach Coordinator

Taki currently supports 81 Partners in the East Central Territory. During July, Taki provided pedestrian safety education to summer camp students, attended several Open House events with School Partners, conducted a Walk Audit, revamped the SRTS resource brochure, and hosted an AECOM SRTS Collaborative Webinar.

On July 20th, Taki facilitated a **Walk Audit/Safety Assessment** at **River Ridge Elementary School**, located in Columbia County. The meeting team included the school principal, Columbia County School board officials, Regional Commission planners, Columbia County Sheriff Department and Columbia County planners. During the audit Taki and Kyle Collins, **GDOT District Communications Officer** was able to point out potential barriers and suggestions for the upcoming school year. See the photo to the left of the walk audit participants observing sidewalk and traffic issues and opportunities.

On July 22nd, Taki presented pedestrian and bicycle safety education to a group of Kindergarteners at the **MACH Academy**, a Friend of the Resource Center, located in Richmond County. During the presentation, Taki read pedestrian friendly books and taught the students about the importance of wearing a helmet when riding their bicycle. Taki read "*Oh the Things You Can Do that Are Good for You*" by Dr. Seuss. Once the safety presentation was complete, the students participated in a pedestrian safety coloring activity. Each student received a SRTS pencil and bracelet for their participation. See photo to the left which includes, Taki reading to the MACH Academy summer camp participants.

Taki organized and facilitated the first quarterly **AECOM SRTS** Collaborative Webinar on July 27th. The webinar included 11 School Outreach Coordinators (SOCs) from the South Carolina, Georgia, Vermont, and Massachusetts SRTS projects. Representatives from each project shared program highlights and events. The meeting was informal and allowed outreach teams an opportunity to collaborate and enhance their own efforts. The Georgia project team is looking forward to implementing some ideas received from other projects. For example, the South Carolina Safe Routes project provided continuing education credit options to their SRTS Statewide Forum, and we hope to do that at the 2016 Georgia Forum.

Fairview Elementary School, in Newton County, hosted an Open House on July, 29th. Taki attended the event and passed out information about the school's upcoming International Walk to School Day event that will be held on October 7th. Taki also shared success stories with parents about past walk to school day events.



On June 30th, Taki met with the **Newton County School District Nutrition/Wellness** Coordinator, Susan Stone. Taki and Susan discussed potential ideas for planning walking events and the upcoming school district wellness committee meeting. Taki provided SRTS bookmarks and bracelets for the Newton County Theme School Physical Education party, which will be held in August.

Taki spearheaded efforts to complete the SRTS brochure for the upcoming school year, attended Friend organization meetings, and continuously encouraged school Partners to register for International Walk to School Day in October.

Southwest Territory – Chelsea Carter, School Outreach Coordinator

The efforts in the Southwest Territory for July focused on expanding the relationships with prospective schools and Regional Commission contacts. Chelsea worked with organizations and schools in **Jeff Davis County** to aim for Safe Routes to School program implementation in the new school year. Introductory meetings with school officials are being set for September, and a Walk Audit is being scheduled for late August to assess the campus safety of Jeff Davis schools. **Jill Yearty** from **Jeff Davis Schools** will act as the Champion and the **Heart of Georgia Regional Commission** contact, **James Pope**, has agreed to support education and planning efforts.

While at the Safe Routes to School Forum this June in Macon, Chelsea met **William Collins** and **Mayor Mary Warnell** from Pembroke in Bryan County. The Pembroke delegation was excited to see the creative education session and asked Chelsea to provide Safe Routes to School services in Pembroke. In July, Chelsea met with members of the town twice regarding the program and the new elementary school being built there. While Pembroke belongs to the Coastal Territory, the city asked to work with Chelsea, specifically, and Patti and Chelsea agreed that Chelsea could coordinate their Safe Routes program needs.

While working with new schools and continuing to make relationships with current partners, Chelsea has increased and further developed her communication and partnerships with the six Regional Commissions that touch the Southwest Territory. In July, Chelsea met with her contacts face to face in order to discuss obstacles and issues, as well as successes, with program implementation, continuation, and promotion for the upcoming year. Working with the Regional Commissions reinforces the Safe Routes to School network in these predominantly rural areas.

Efforts have begun to create an opportunity for the Regional Commission contacts of the Southwest Territory to meet in person and discuss, troubleshoot, and form action plans for Safe Routes to School and **Teens in the Driver's Seat**. The meeting, which will take place September 25th in Columbus, will give both programs an opportunity to plan and collaborate about the 2015-2016 school year. In attendance at this meeting will be representatives from **the Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Department of Education, Safe Routes to School Resource Center, and Teens in the Driver's Seat**. Currently, contacts from the **Three Rivers, South Georgia, Southwest Georgia and Middle Georgia Regional Commission** have confirmed that they will attend. The **River Valley Regional Commission** is co-hosting this meeting with Chelsea.

North Georgia Territory – Elizabeth Jones, School Outreach Coordinator

Elizabeth manages 104 Partner Schools in the North Georgia Territory. July was a time to work on training and other preparation for the start of a new school year. Some highlights from the month include:

- Joining **America Walks** and participating in the summer webinar series. Some of the series topics have helped foster ideas on how to promote walkable communities within school zones and increase awareness and the need for safely walking to school.
- Presenting and training on the importance of safety while walking to school with **Atlanta area School Crossing Guards**.
- Partnering with **Bike Cobb** to establish a partnership with **Brumby Elementary School**, in order to grow parent participation and community partnerships to educate on pedestrian and bike safety. Through

planning and coordination, the partnership also hopes to build bike trails, sidewalks, and other infrastructure at the school's new location which is scheduled to open in the 2016-17 school year.

After a successful Walk Audit last month, Elizabeth presented her **Walk Audit Observation Tool** to the SOC team and it has since been adopted as a tool that SOC's are using for their Walk Audits.

Elizabeth has been working with **Walker County** and **Cobb County Safe Kids Coalitions** to plan Walk to School events for the upcoming year. She also partnered with **Safe Kids Cobb** to plan for a few summer back to school events and open houses that are scheduled for early August next month.

Finally, Elizabeth's goal to re-charge inactive partners this year is still moving forward. She has reached out to a number of inactive partners to work on ways to increase the number of walkers and participation in Walk to School events during the upcoming school year. Response is likely to pick up as the school year progresses.

Coastal Regional Commission – Patti Sistrunk, Senior School Outreach Coordinator and Project Manager

Patti maintains 41 School Partners in the Coastal Territory.

Patti supported multiple Safe Routes efforts during July including meeting with **Savannah Chatham County Public School System (SCCPSS) Campus Police** regarding the Walking School Bus planned for **Hodge Elementary**. Working with SCCPSS Campus Police, **Healthy Savannah**, and the **Savannah Bicycle Campaign**, Patti provided training to 21 volunteers to provide Safe Routes to School support and resources to ten Title I schools in Savannah. Most of those schools are Partnered with the Resource Center. Groups represented included area college athletics and Greek-life organizations, businesses, non-profits, and government entities. Patti explained the Safe Routes to School program, the work being done in Savannah and surrounding communities, and opportunities for volunteering and Championing in these underserved schools. Healthy Savannah shared information about their work with the Title I schools and the communities to hold public meetings and survey community members. The training was held on July 21st at the SCCPSS Annex in Garden City.

Patti also attended the **Safe Kids Savannah Coalition** Summer Strategic Planning Meeting in Savannah on July 17th. Patti has served on the Safe Kids Savannah Executive Board for three years, and this year, she's been elected to serve as Vice-Chairperson and continue as Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Committee Chair. Patti will encourage Safe Kids continued support of Safe Routes related activities and solicit volunteers and resources from Coalition member groups. The Meeting included discussion of Walk and Bike to School events, Bicycle safety education opportunities, and on-going pedestrian safety assemblies at schools throughout the school year. Safe Kids has applied for a grant from Safe Kids Worldwide for funding and support for International Walk to School Day with Patti's help.

The **Savannah Mobility Advisory Committee (MAC) Pedestrian Safety Sub-Committee** met on July 14th. The committee determined that safe infrastructure and complete pedestrian and bicycle routes to schools (especially Title I schools) would be one of three proposed priorities for the MAC's goals. Patti is representing Safe Routes to School on the sub-committee and has offered assistance and input where needed for the Bicycle Safety Sub-committee. The Savannah MAC is working to improve transportation options in Savannah, prioritize efforts, find resources, and improving communication and aligning objectives among stakeholders including Georgia Safe Routes to School.

Marketing and Resource Development

The team posted to Facebook five times including information about the back to school events, open houses, and the walk audit in the East Central territory. Click here to go to the [Facebook Page](#).

The project team added the completed travel plans and current Resource Center partner map to the website. Go to www.SafeRoutesGA.org to see the website.

The project team reviewed and edited a new Resource Center brochure. Additionally, the marketing staff worked with an outside vendor to finalize the edits to the new 12-month poster calendar which will be printed next month. Incentives were procured for the fall season. These include stickers, glow-in-the-dark bracelets with the project website, retro-reflective zipper pulls for student backpacks, and GA SRTS pencils.

The project team continues to coordinate with GDOT's District Communications Officers (DCOs) to promote events and programs regionally and statewide.

Travel Plan Assistance

GDOT confirmed the Safe Routes to School Travel Plans and Safety-Focused Reports, and those have all been shared with local planning teams and have been added to the website. The project team will develop a map showing Travel Plan locations on the website in August. The timeline for this school year's travel plans has been developed. SOC's are beginning to promote the plans to local communities.

For more information on the planning process, visit <http://www.saferoutesga.org/content/safe-routes-school-travel-plans-and-reports>. The 2014-15 school year plans are:

Travel Plan Assistance

Drew Charter School, Fulton County
Turner Middle School, Douglas County

Safety-Focused Report

Henderson Mill Elementary School, Dekalb County
North Mitchell County Elementary, Mitchell County

Thirty Day Look Ahead

August is a busy month for the Resource Center and includes the start of the school year for most of the state's schools. The outreach team will focus on open house and back to school events, promoting International Walk to School Day, meeting with Partners to plan for the school year, and encouraging student travel tally collection. The outreach team will continue to work with schools, districts, and communities to plan events and resources that support walking and biking programs. Resources to be delivered in August include the 2015-16 school year calendar, the GA SRTS project brochure, a new incentive order form, and incentives for fall events.

The project team will meet for the third quarter of 2015 in Atlanta near the end of the month and discuss project progress, present updates to GDOT, and coordinate plans for the fall season.